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ABSTRACT

The work experience of high school students is investigated, including type of work, amount of time worked, reasons for jobs away from home, effect of work on school performance and activities, and reasons for not being employed. The sample consisted of 1,227 urban and rural secondary school students in 14 Georgia high schools, 35.9 percent of which were white males, 38.5 percent white females, 9.9 percent black males, and 14.4 percent black females. Over 86 percent reported work responsibilities at home requiring ten hours or less weekly; 34 percent reported that they held jobs outside the home, with the majority working 21 or fewer hours per week. Those with jobs worked to purchase luxury items, have spending money, operate a car, save for college, or to gain work experience. Black students appeared to have fewer opportunities for jobs; suburban students had the most opportunities. The most notable finding was the lack of relationship between academic achievement and work in and out of the home. A substantial number of non-job holders indicated that they did not know the procedures for finding a job. The positive effect of part-time work experience, job knowledge, and reading achievement on employment status provides support for encouraging limited work experience for high school students. (KC)

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Patterns of Work Experience Among High School Students: Educational Implications

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When the United States was a nation of farmers, shopkeepers, skilled craftsmen and a limited number of professionals, parents frequently looked upon children as an economic resource vital to the welfare of the family unit. As the nation industrialized, children very often continued to be an economic resource as industrial workers. But as our society continued to change, the number of farm families dwindled: ever advancing technology channelled our labor force into high specialized and skilled jobs or into unskilled, often menial and uninspiring jobs. Work at home also changed. New labor saving devices of all types helped to reduce the long hours of hard work required to maintain a household. It became possible for women to enter the work force in increasing numbers.

One result of this transformation in the nature of work both in the home and on the job has been a change in the role and status of family members. Working mothers have become more commonplace, children are more independent, but their period of adolescence is longer; school is viewed as their "job." Household "chores" continue, but are more varied. Many parents continue to permit or encourage their children to obtain suitable part-time employment outside the home. Their reasons are more diverse than formerly, but financial independence of youth is certainly a major factor.[1] In the last generation employment of in-school youth has been on the rise. Since 1940, work hours for teenage males have increased 50.0% and have doubled for females.[2] Compared to earlier periods, young people today are more likely to work at untraditional times such as late evenings or Sundays. Although the workplaces for teenagers avoid the excesses of earlier industrial jobs, most jobs available to teenagers are "secondary jobs" that require few skills, provide few incentives or hope of future employment, and pay low wages.[3]

In traditional settings, youth worked to help sustain the family. Today in American society this is less likely to be true. They are more likely to work to purchase and maintain an auto, to buy luxury goods or to have "spending money" for a variety of items such as snacks, records, clothes and cigarettes. Part-time work by high school youth has been both praised and criticized. Working long hours has been cited as having a negative effect on teenagers' general attitudes and on social achievement, but increases the chances of delinquency.[4] Others contend that part-time employment does not generally interfere with students' school work or social life, but rather helps to develop young people's ability to budget their time wisely, provides valuable work experience which in turn teaches good work habits, and attitudes, and provides a source of income for individuals and families that plays an important role in our economy.[5] Some even argue that the full potential of the teenage job market has been unrealized because "too many teenagers...are not willing to work."[6]

These conflicting claims and our own personal observations prompted this study. Although some recent studies have provided interesting and sometimes contradictory findings about the extent of employment, kinds of jobs, hours worked and effect on school achievement and personal lives, few have looked holistically at work at home and on the job or dealt much with students perceptions about their work and its effect on their lives. The study was, therefore, designed to parallel elements of other survey research studies in order to provide a basis for comparison, but to add additional dimensions either not dealt with or touched on only in a limited way in other studies.

Methods and Procedures

Data reported were provided by students on an instrument designed for use in this study. Anonymous responses were obtained to minimize any tendency toward self-serving estimates made by the students. In most cases, students knew that the remainder of the class session in which the instrument was administered would be a discussion of jobs and working, which appeared to stimulate interest in and serious attention to the instrument.

Some items included in the instrument permitted multiple responses. Only frequencies and percentage were tabulated and reported for these items. Some items were designed to be answered only by subgroups (reasons for working outside the home only by those who did so, for example) so Ns for some items were substantially lower than the N of the total sample. Some items that permitted multiple responses had Ns that exceeded the N of the total sample. The remaining items were suitable for application of non-parametric statistical method of analyses. Chi square analyses were conducted by race, sex, extent of urbanization of the area served by schools, student age, and student reported grades for these items.

Subjects

The sample included 1277 secondary school students enrolled in 14 Georgia high schools. Teacher and social studies supervisor members of Georgia Council for Social Sciences cooperated in arranging for school and student participation and for local administration of instruments. Subjects were classified by age, race, sex, demographic setting served by the school, and self-reported grades earned in school.

As classified by age at the time of the survey, 27.1% of subjects were 15 or younger, 29.5% were 16; and 43.3% were 17 or older. Comparable data for the state as of the date of the administration of the instrument are not available, but there is no reason to suspect that the sample was atypical in age spectrum.

By sex, 35.9% of subjects were white males, 38.5% white females, 9.9% black males, and 14.4% black females. The remaining 26 students, 1.3% of the sample, were of another race or failed to report race. The public school population of Georgia is approximately 30% black. Over-represented in this study were schools in the northern one-third of Georgia where school populations are predominently white or all white; white students therefore were also slightly overrepresented in the study. However, all of the major geographic regions of the state were included in the sample. The discrepancy by sex for students of both races may have been a consequence of a higher dropout rate for males.

Four major types of demographic settings are served by Georgia high schools. Rural schools usually serve an entire county including the small town in which they are located; 33.8% of subjects were enrolled in these schools. Small city schools usually have a student population which represents the spectrum of students by type of residential area; 29.3% of

subjects were from small city schools. Both rural and small city school students were overrepresented in the data initially collected. Random sampling by school was used to adjust the number of subjects in schools of these two types to produce an adjusted sample that was more representative of the state.

A third type of school setting is urban, serving students within the larger cities. The student population includes primarily "blue collar" and lower socioeconomic groups. Urban students comprised 23.0% of the sample. Suburban high schools enroll students primarily from families classified by occupation as "white collar," professional, and highly skilled manufacturing and service jobs. Students from these schools comprised 16.0% of the sample. Each of the four major types of population settings was represented in approximately the same proportion as is the total population of the state.

Self-reports of grades typically earned were presented by students who selected from among four categories: mostly A (very high), mostly A and B (high), mostly B and C (fair), and mostly C and lower (low) grades. Proportions reporting each category by race, sex, and population settings served by school were generally consistent with expectations and observed grading practices in Georgia schools. There are no specific data for the total population with which the sample's self-reports can be compared, however.

In summary, proportions except for race with black students slightly underrepresented appeared to be representative of the secondary school population of the state at large. The large sample size for all subgroups, including race, permits generalizing from the sample to the total population.

Family Milieu

Work at home and at a paid job outside the home were examined in several respects. Family circumstances might affect need to work both at home and away. One measure of family circumstances that students can report with high accuracy but with minimal invasion of their privacy is number of adults and working adults in the home. Adult was defined as age 18 or older and not a fulltime student. Students reported two adults in the home in 59% of cases, only one adult in 15%, and three or more adults in 26%. Black students were significantly more likely not to live in two adult households (χ^2=27.819, P=.0001). Students 15 years of age or younger were significantly more likely to live in two adult homes (χ^2=10.364, P=.0347). Urban students were more likely to live in one adult and suburban students in two adult homes (χ^2=42.164, P=.001). There was no significant relationship between number of adults in the family and grades reported by student.

A majority (55%) of the sample lived in a home with two working adults, 37% with one working adult, 3% with three working adults, and 4% in a home without an employed adult. No significant difference by age, sex, race, school demographic setting, or reported grades occurred. Within these social contexts, working at home and at a job outside the home were examined.

Work at Home

A heavy majority of students, 88%, reported that they do some work at home. Age, sex, and demographic setting, but not race were significantly related statistically to home responsibilities. More females, (91%), than males (84%) reported that they do some work at home (χ^2=16.354, P=.012), but the similarity is more impressive than the difference. Percent by sex was nearly the same for blacks and whites. Students who were 15 or younger were more likely to have home tasks than those 17 or older (χ^2=11.319, P=.0232) but the percentages (91% and 85% respectively) again were impressive more for their similarity than their difference. The school setting difference (χ^2=16.735, P=.0103) is attributable to the higher than expected proportion of rural students and lower than expected proportion of suburban students who reported work at home. Overall, work responsibilities at home typified these contemporary high school students.

Types of Work at Home

In reporting types of work at home students listed odd jobs, washing dishes, cleaning and laundry, lawn mowing and cooking in descending order of frequency (Table 1). This overall pattern varied by age, sex, race, and

Table 1

Types of Work Around Home

		%*
1	Odd Jobs (taking out trash, etc.)	66.2
2	Washing Dishes	60.3
3	Cleaning/laundry	60.2
4	Lawn Care	40.9
5	Cooking	38.7
6	Child Care	18.6
7	Farm Work	11.2
8	Others	12.2

*Students could list more than one task so % totals more than 100.

school setting. Variations by age were modest and mixed. As age increased students tended to report less child care, lawn mowing, farm work and odd jobs. Females reported performing traditionally feminine tasks such as doing dishes, cleaning, laundry, cooking and child care as most frequent types of activities, but white females also reported traditionally male tasks. Males reported odd jobs as the most frequent tasks, but traditionally feminine tasks were done frequently, more so than lawn care, for example. White females were as likely to care for the lawn as males, but black females did not perform "male" tasks. Sex was a factor in the type of work done at home, but the data were not a close fit with traditional stereotypes. Rural students reported much more farm work than other students, and urban students reported lawn care less frequently but "in house" type work more frequently than others.

Hours Worked at Home

Most students (86%) who reported having work responsibilities at home indicated that they worked no more than 10 hours weekly on those tasks. Less than 4% reported working 20 or more hours at home. Hours worked did not differ significantly across variables except by school setting ($\underline{X}^2$=29.527, P=.0024), where rural students worked more and suburban students worked less than expected around the home. The hours worked by students at home was not related to the grades students reported earning in school. In summary, work at home was expected of and performed by most high school students, but the time required was not extensive for most nor did it have an adverse effect on school achievement. The type of work performed was what might be expected and though often sex related, it did not always follow traditional or stereotypic patterns.

Allowance and Pay

Only 27% of students said that they were paid for work at home. Students aged 15 and younger were significantly more likely to be paid then those 17 and older ($\underline{X}^2$=26.692, P=.0001). Those with only fair grades were significantly more likely to be paid than those with good and with high grades ($\underline{X}^2$=8.701, P=.0335). Differences by sex, race, and demographic setting were not statistically significant. Payment for work at home to students too young to hold legally many jobs outside the home was not unexpected. Payment to those with relatively low grades suggested possible reasons that are worthy of further research into the social dynamics of family organization of students with lower grades.

Some 35% of students in the sample received an allowance. Those 15 and under were significantly more likely to receive one ($\underline{X}^2$=19.704, P=.0001), and so were black students of both sexes ($\underline{X}^2$=9.860, P=.0198). Black males were more likely and white females less likely to rely on allowance and pay for work at home to meet all of their needs ($\underline{X}^2$=12.00, P=.0056).

Perceptions about Work at Home

Students saw their work at home as needed. Over half of students classified their work at home as helpful, over one quarter rated it as essential to the family, and only 15% ranked it as a minor help. Black females were more likely to classify work at home as essential, white males were least likely, and females of both races were unlikely to classify it as minor ($\underline{X}^2$=21.345, P=.0016).

Students also were asked about their parents' perception of the usefulness of their work at home, with a fourth category of "don't know" added to the possible responses. Males were more likely to respond "helpful," and black males were more likely to say that parents thought their help was minor ($\underline{X}^2$=19.437, P=.0217). More students under 15 ($\underline{X}^2$=20.371, P=.0024) and those who reported low grades ($\underline{X}^2$=32.198, P=.002) responded that they didn't know parental views. Urban students were more likely to say parents believed their work is essential, while suburban were more likely to state that parents rated its importance as minor ($\underline{X}^2$=17.659, P=.0393).

Students who reported low grades claimed that work at home has a negative effect on their school work and their social life (X^2=44.672, P=.0001). Sex, race, school setting, and age did not produce significant differences in response patterns. It should be noted that students with low grades were not more likely to work at home than others and they did not work more hours at home than others. There is no evidence that lower grades were caused by work at home.

Jobs Outside the Home

Although only 34.3% of the students had a job outside the home at the time of the survey, only 19.1% reported never having had one. Over one-fourth were looking for a job and another 8.8% had given up looking because of the poor job market. Only one in ten (9.5%) expressed no interest in a job. As might be expected, age, sex, and race variations existed. Not surprisingly, fewer blacks than whites, especially females, reported having jobs (males 23.8%; females 20.1%). Blacks were also more likely never to have had a job, to be looking for a job, or to have given up looking for a job. Fewer than 10% of white males reported never having had a job, while nearly 40% held jobs. Blacks were about twice as likely as whites to have given up looking for jobs because they could not find a suitable one.

As might be expected, younger students were less likely to have a job, more likely never to have had one, or to be looking for one. Nearly a third (31.1%) of those under 16 never had a job compared to 11.5% of those over 16. Nearly half (48.4%) of the older students had jobs as compared to 15.4% of they younger students. About three times as many students under 16 (16.9%) indicated no interest in a job as did those over 16 (5.4%).

Demographic setting was also a factor in student job status. Suburban students were both more likely to never have had a job (13.7%) and to have a job (52.9%) than other students. Correspondingly, they were less likely to be looking for a job (18.1%) or to have given up looking if they want one (4.4%). Students from small cities and major urban centers provide a reverse spectrum of responses. They were only half as likely to hold jobs and twice as likely to have given up looking for one. That nearly 43% of urban students reported they formerly had jobs as compared to only 28.7% who held jobs reflects reports of higher unemployment and labor turnover rates in these urban settings.

Types of Jobs

Students engaged in a wide variety of jobs. Although race, sex, age and demographic setting resulted in some variation, the basic pattern holds across these variables. The largest proportion—well over a third—listed jobs that we classified as "Other." A large number of these individuals were self-employed in "unstructured," sometimes irregular or seasonal work such as baby sitting or mowing lawns. Another large number of jobs in the "other" category could best be categorized as clerical or secretarial. Probably 10% or so would fall into this category. Of the remaining categories, nearly 30% worked in food service jobs. Food service is the second largest group regardless of race, sex, age or location.

Nearly another 10% worked in sales jobs. It was the third most frequently listed for all groups except for white males who listed it fourth behind construction jobs (10%). Only 5% or fewer worked in each of a variety of other jobs: construction trades, supermarket clerks, janitors, stock clerks, gas station attendants, or manufacturing. Younger students were far more likely to list "other" jobs, especially those who were self-employed (60.5%). Those over 16 were far less likely to list jobs in this category (29.3%). The importance of sex identification with certain kinds of jobs was apparent in jobs such as gas station/attendant, construction (only 2 females) and stock clerks (less than 1% females). Race is a factor also, but sometimes differentially: black males (39.8%) and white females (36.7%) were more likely to hold food service jobs than their counterparts. Race was a more consistent factor in the frequency in holding janitoral jobs. Black males (9.6%) and black females (7.8%) listed this classification more frequently than did white (males = 4%; females = .6%).

Analysis by school setting yielded patterns that were basically similar except for modest variations among rural students who were somewhat more likely to list "other" jobs (42.8%) and construction trades (6.7%) and less likely to list sales jobs (5.5%). In general, the pattern of jobs held by the sample of Georgia students is consistent with that found in other studies.[7]

Hours Worked Outside the Home

Of students who held a job, 60% worked fewer than 21 hours per week, but 40% worked longer hours, usually equaling or exceeding their hours spent in class each week. These results were similar to results from studies previously cited. Age, race, sex, and demographic setting all were significantly related to the number of hours worked on jobs.

Younger students were more likely to work fewer hours and older students longer hours (χ^2=39.605, P=.0001). Over half (55%) of those 15 and under worked fewer than 10 hours per week, while 23.1% of those 17 or older worked 30 or more hours and another 57.1% worked more than 10 hours weekly. Of those reporting 30 hours or more, 91.7% were at least 16 and 70.7% were 17 or older.

By race and sex, white males were more likely to work longer hours and white females shorter hours. Black students of both sexes were likely to work shorter hours, except that black males were as likely as whites to work over 30 hours weekly (χ^2=12.60, P=.0056). The distribution by race in the various school settings, with a disproportionate number of whites in suburban areas where the opportunity to work longer hours appears to be greater, may account for much of the difference by race.

Only 2% of the sample worked more than 40 hours weekly outside the home; all were rural whites and one-third were females. Results for this small group do not invalidate the preceding generalization about work availability in suburban areas. Suburban students worked significantly longer hours than rural and small city students (χ^2=57.781, P=.0001).

The number of hours worked per week was not significantly related to grades earned in school, even for the small group who worked more than 40 hours per week. Some effect of working on grades reported by students may have been masked by the tendency for grades and hours worked both to be correlated with race. Also, 20.8% of students who had given up a job cited interference with school work as one reason for doing so, thus removing some of a possible tendency for work to affect achievement negatively in this sample.

Reasons for Holding a Job

Students were given a list of ten possible reasons for holding a job. They were asked to respond in two ways: check all items that applied to them and then to list the single most important reason. The results appear in Table 2. The rankings of responses to both questions are most notable

Table 2

Students' Reasons for Jobs

Reasons Cited*			Most Important Reason		
Rank		%	Rank		%
1	Spending Money	82.5	1	Luxury Items	20.6
2	Luxury Items	69.4	2	Spending Money	19.7
3	Work Experience	53.3	3	Work Experience	17.0
4	Something To Do	44.5	4	Auto	15.1
5	Auto	43.5	5	College	12.4
6	College	29.0	6	Help Family	5.8
7	Get Away From Home	26.7	7	Something To Do	4.1
8	Meet People	25.7	8	Get Away From Home	2.5
9	Help Family	12.7	9	Meet People	1.9
10	Meet School Requirements	7.2	10	Meet School Requirements	.8

*Multiple reasons, total exceeds 100%

for their similarity. Saving for luxury items and spending money ranked at the top of both lists although in reverse position. Work experience was third in both lists. Maintaining an auto was ranked either fourth or fifth. "Meeting school requirements" ranked last in both listings. "To get away from home" and "to meet people" finished near the bottom of the rankings in both listings. Only two reasons showed more than one position switch in the rankings. "Something to do," ranked fourth in the multi-factor list dropped to the seventh position as the main reason. "Help family," ranked ninth in the multiple listing, jumped to the sixth position as a main reason for holding a job; however, it represented a sharp drop-off in responses compared to saving for college which ranked ahead of it (5.8% compared to 12.4%). Of the ten reasons provided for students to choose from, five were monetary or financial in nature and five were not. Importantly, four of five main reasons ranked at the top were monetary.

The other reason, "work experience," demonstrates a career perspective and future orientation that sometimes it is charged contemporary youth lack.

Analysis of the most important reason for holding jobs by age, race and sex, and school setting provided some interesting results. As age increased, saving for luxury items became less important, declining from 28.6% for students 15 and younger to 17.3% for those 17 and older. As might be expected, autos became an increasingly important factor with age, jumping from 3.3% for those under 16 to 19.6% for those over 16. Helping their families was the least important for younger students (1.1%) but became increasingly more important with succeeding age groups (5.7% and 7.8%). The ambiguities of early adolescence are apparent in the frequency of responses the youngest students gave for "something to do" (9.9%) as compared to those 16 or older (less than 3%). The increasing responsibility older students felt for helping their families was also apparent, moving from last position among the youngest students to the sixth ranked reason for the oldest students. Urban and black students were more likely to list work experience as their chief reason for a job compared to other students. Urban students and blacks also were less likely to list automobile expenses as their primary reason for working while suburban students and white males were more likely to do so.

Overall, these response patterns are not unexpected. The dominance of the individualistic, materialistic motives of American society, the diminished importance of children as an economic asset, the importance of the automobile and of college education are all clearly reflected in these student responses.

Perceptions about Jobs

Most students liked their jobs but did not expect to pursue them as their life's work (61.1%). Only slightly more than one in ten (10.8%) did not like their jobs. A slightly larger proportion (13.7%) could "take it or leave it." About the same number liked their jobs well enough to indicate a willingness to pursue them as a career. Responses were very similar across age, race and sex, and demographic setting groupings, producing no significantly different patterns.

Reasons for Giving Up Jobs

Those students who had given up jobs and were no longer working were asked to check as many of eight possible reasons as were appropriate and then to identify the single most important reason. The data are presented in Table 3. What is most striking about the data is the consistency of the reasons cited. Three of four reasons appeared at the top of both lists. Interference with school activities was by far both the most frequently cited and the most important reason for giving up jobs. Low pay and interference with class performance appeared as either second or third on the list. In the bottom half of the listing, three of four reasons were also the same. The least often cited and lowest ranked reason was "Don't Need Money."

This pattern of responses tends to support a concern voiced by teachers and researchers—the negative impact of teenagers' jobs on school work.

Table 3

Students' Reasons for Giving Up Job

Reasons Cited*			Most Important Reason		
Rank		%	Rank		%
1	Interfered With School Activities	55.4	1	Interfered With School Activities	37.6
2	Low Pay	24.3	2	Class Work Suffered	12.4
3	Interfered With Social Life	21.1	3	Low Pay	12.1
4	Class Work Suffered	20.8	4	Completed School Requirements	12.1
5	Didn't Like Job	19.2	5	Didn't Like Job	12.1
6	Completed School Requirements	16.8	6	Parents Disapproved	6.2
7	Parents Disapproved	10.3	7	Interfered With Social Life	5.1
8	Don't Need Money	9.7	8	Don't Need Money	3.8

*Multiple reasons, total exceeds 100%

However, students were much more concerned with the effect on their participation in school activities than with effect on academic achievement. Parental acceptance of students holding job or their limited influence on decisions about jobs is also apparent; only one in ten gave parent disapproval as a reason for leaving their jobs.

The variables of age, race, sex, and school setting had differential effects on response patterns. As age increased students were more likely to indicate that class work suffered, perhaps reflecting the impact of longer working hours and increased school homework. Low pay was more of a factor for students 15 or younger than for older students, although they also reported leaving jobs more frequently because they did not need the money. Other variations by age were minor.

Greater variations existed related to sex, race and school setting. Although interference with school activities was the chief reason cited for giving up a job among all groups, it was more of a factor for males, especially white males (43.6%) and suburban students (45.0%). Low pay was more important for males, especially black males (18.8%) than for females (8.9-9.3%). The effect on school work was a more important reason for white females (16.1%) and less important for suburban students than for others. Parents' disapproval was three to four times more important for black females (14.3%) than for other race/sex groups. It was slightly more important for urban students, but less important for students in small cities. Blacks were somewhat less likely to leave a job because they did not like it than were whites. Not surprisingly, the concentration of whites in the suburbs resulted in a higher proportion of suburban students listing dislike of jobs as a reason for leaving. Completion of school requirements was a more important reason for blacks (16.4%) and white females (12.7%) than for white males (5.7%). It was much less of a factor for suburban students (2.5%) than those in other settings, especially rural students (15.9%).

In summary, students who gave up jobs did so for a variety of reasons, the most important of which was interference with school activities, followed in about equal frequency by negative affect on school achievement, low pay, completion of school requirements and dislike of the job. Although school activities and class performance together accounted for one-half of the total, three times as many students quit their jobs because of school extra-curricular activities as for negative impact on class work.

Reasons for Never Having a Job

Students who never held a job outside the home were asked to check from a list of possible reasons all those that were factors in their situation. From among this listing they were then asked to identify the most important reason. The results are found in Table 4. The importance of

Table 4

Reasons for Never Having a Job

All Reasons*		Most Important Reason	
Rank	%	Rank	%
1 Don't Have Time Because of School Work/Activities	48.2	1 Don't Have Time Because of School Work/Activities	36.7
2 Don't Know How to Find One	29.2	2 Don't Know How to Find One	16.4
3 Tried, But Couldn't Find One	22.1	3 Tried, But Couldn't Find One	13.3
4 Don't Have Time Because of Home Responsibilities	19.9	4 Don't Have Time Because of Home Responsibilities	9.7
5 Not Interested in Available Jobs	16.8	5 Not Interested in Available Jobs	8.4
6 Don't Need the Money	13.7	6 Parents Disapproved	6.6
7 Parents Disapproved	11.9	7 Don't Need Money	5.8
8 Low Pay	6.6	8 Low Pay	2.2
9 Friends Don't Work and Disapproved	3.5	9 Friends Don't Work and Disapproved	1.0

*Multiple reasons, total exceeds 100%

school work and activities to these students is clear. It ranks first among all reasons cited (48.2%) and as the most important reason (36.7%). But, of major importance for educators is that students ranked second in importance that they did not know how to find a job. Perhaps reflecting the conditions brought on by the economic recession of the time in which the survey was undertaken, "Tried, but could not find a job" was ranked third. However, the failure to find a job might also reflect the inability of students to present themselves favorably to potential employers, a factor that may need to be considered when evaluating school curricula and programs.

Although 88% of students indicated they had work responsibilities around home, these responsibilities were cited by only one in five as a factor, and by fewer than one in ten as the major factor in not having a job. About as many were uninterested in the jobs available. Parental disapproval was a relatively unimportant factor (11.9%) but was more important than the influence of friends which was the least important factor cited. As found in other research, low pay was not a major factor for students who chose to remain out of the job market.[8]

Variations by age, sex, race and location are about what might be expected. Age is a factor in parental disapproval, financial need, lack of interest and success in finding a job. Parental disapproval is a more important factor for younger students, cited twice as frequently by students under 16 as those 17 and older. Similarly, lack of financial need was about twice as important for younger students as for older students. Surprisingly, lack of interest was cited three times as frequently by students 17 and older as by students 15 and younger. Older students also reported trying but failing to find a job over twice as frequently as did younger students.

Sex and race variations provided some interesting variations. Failure to find a job was listed more by black females and less by black males than by other groups. However, black males listed this as their main reason more than those in any other group. Overall, this pattern of responses is consistent with the findings of other studies.[9] Generally, sex and race were not factors in knowledge about finding jobs, although black males listed it more and white females less in the multiple listing of reasons for not holding a job. School was much more important for females than for males (by a factor of 2). As the main reason, white males listed school as a factor less than other sex/race groups did. Parental disapproval was a more important factor for females than males, reflecting the strength of traditional value patterns, at least in Georgia. Home responsibilities were much less of a factor for black males than for other sex/race groups, again perhaps refelcting the persistance of traditional subgroups value patterns.

Specific school setting differences were numerous, but the following generalizations seem warranted. Small city students were more likely to cite lack of knowledge about how to find a job; suburban youth were less likely to do so. Urban students, as might be expected, and rural students, though somewhat less so, were more likely to have tried and failed to find a job. School work and activities were less important reasons for rural and small city students. Low pay and parental disapproval was more a factor for suburban students than for others. Parental disapproval was less important for urban and rural students. Home responsibilities were somewhat less of a factor for suburban students than for others.

Generally, the patterns found with regard to age, sex and race, and school location are those that might be expected. Of particular interest to educators is the importance of school activities and work in students' decisions not to seek a job. Also of potential importance for curriculum

decision making is the reported lack of knowledge about how to find a job, and secondly perhaps of how to succeed in presenting oneself in job interviews.

Work and School Activities

Two generalizations best describe participation of the total sample in school activities. The more hours worked at home and away, the fewer hours are devoted to participation in school activities. Second, students with higher grades devoted more time to school activities than others. However, extrapolation from the data suggested that there are two subgroups whose participation level is not explained adequately by these two generalizations.

Students in one subgroup have high grades, participate heavily, but nevertheless find time to work a moderate number of hours as well. The second subgroup has low grades, participates little or not at all, does not work outside the home, and does little or no work at home.

Among participators, clubs/hobby groups and sports attracted about the same numbers (34.4% and 33.9%, respectively). Bands and auxiliary groups were the next most popular (15.2%) with the remainder of participating students scattered among other activities. The kind of participation varied little by age but considerably by sex, race, and demographic setting. Males participated more in sports, as did blacks (black males, 64%; white males, 38%; black females, 31%; white females, 22%). Females, especially whites, (44%) participated in club activities more than male cohorts (24%). Band and auxiliary units were least attractive to black males. Urban and small city students were more likely to participate in sports and music than were rural and suburban students.

Participation was analyzed by hours per week and by hours per week during the busiest period of activity, such as football season, for example. Some participation was reported by 70% of the sample. During their busiest period, 43% of students were involved in school activities more than five hours weekly, and 25% participated more than five hours weekly throughout the year. At their busiest, 24% reported 11 or more hours per week, while 11% maintained that pace at all times. No participation at all was reported by 30% and another 27% spent less than five hours per week in activities.

Students 15 and under devoted more time to school activity than others, while students 17 and over were more likely than others to devote no time at all than others. These results held for both the full school year and the busiest period ($\underline{X}^2$=24.995, P=.003 and $\underline{X}^2$=15.480, P=.0168). By sex and race, black females were more likely not to participate at all and least likely to participate extensively; black males and white females were more likely to participate to at least some extent; white males were more likely to participate heavily, 11 hours per week or more. Values for the entire year and for the busiest period were $\underline{X}^2$=38.361, P=.0001 and $\underline{X}^2$=33.027, P=.0001, respectively. Suburban students were low participators; small city students participated more and for longer hours. These results also held for the full year and the busiest period ($\underline{X}^2$=35.448, P=.0001 and $\underline{X}^2$=17.115, P=.0469).

Students with high and very high grades were much more likely to participate and for longer hours than students with fair and low grades (χ^2=60.748, P=.0001). This was even more pronounced during the busiest period (χ^2=104.181, P=.0001). These results occurred even though there was no significant difference by grades earned in the number of hours worked either at home or away from home.

The majority (56.7%) of the sample participated in school activities less than five hours per week and nearly one-third never participated at all. Declining school participation with age and increasing time devoted to work suggested that many students begin withdrawing from the total educational process prior to graduation.

Summary and Implications

Using a representative sample of Georgia high school students, this study investigated students' work both at home and on jobs, the kind of work engaged in, the time worked, students' perceptions of their work, reasons for jobs away from home, reasons for not having jobs or leaving jobs, and the effect of work at home and away on school performance and participation in school activities.

In this study, over 86% of the students reported work responsibilities at home requiring 10 hours or less weekly, and 34% reported that they held jobs with the majority (60%) working 21 or fewer hours a week. They generally saw their work at home as important to their families. Most (63%) did not receive pay for work at home and only 35% received an allowance. Those who had jobs worked for a variety of reasons, mostly monetary: to purchase luxury items, to have spending money, to operate an auto, and to save for college, although work experience also was important to them. Most liked their jobs, but saw them as a temporary means to earn money, not something to be pursued as a career. Those who did not have jobs cited possible interference with school activities or class work as the primary reason, although not knowing how to find a job and failure to find one were also important reasons. Of those students who had given up jobs, more reported interference with school activities as the reason than any other. Interference with class work, low pay, dislike of the job, and completion of school requirements were about equally important as secondary reasons. Long hours worked at home and on the job did have a negative affect on participation in school activities, although not on grades as reported by students.

The variables of age, sex, race, school setting and grades were considered in the analysis of data. Although numerous similarities existed, there were also important differences. Younger students worked more at home; older students, especially males, worked more often and for longer hours outside the home. Black students appeared to have fewer opportunities for jobs, suburban students the most opportunities. The most notable finding relative to student reported grades was their lack of relationship to work in and out of the home.

With regard to hours worked on jobs, types of jobs, reasons for jobs, the effect of age, sex, race and demography, the findings offer support for results of other studies, although there are some differences.

A major difference was that this sample of students had a lower proportion employed in jobs outside the home than reported in some other recent studies.[10] This might have been accounted for partly by the depressed job market at the time of the survey (Spring, 1982) and the general patterns of lower student employment among students of the Southeast.[11]

Of particular interest from this and other studies is the finding that transition to the world of work for many students begins during their high school years. Other studies have also found that future job expectations are associated with social class, academic programs and current job status.[12] To argue as do some revisionists among educational historians, that American schools simply perpetuate the existing socio-economic class structure and act as "sorting" mechanisms may be overly strong. Schools obviously reflect their social milieu. A sorting out process does go on, usually in subtle ways, but not always. Educators need to be conscious of this process and in their career education efforts seek to offset elements of unconscious, non-rational sorting of males/females, whites/minorities, blue collar/professionals. Of concern too is the substantial number of non-job holding students who gave as a reasons that they did not know how to go about finding a job and tried but could not find a job. Clearly these students might benefit from specific instruction that would provide information and perhaps simulated experiences in identifying job opportunities and adequate interaction in job interviews. Further, the positive association of part-time work experience, job knowledge, reading achievement, and employment status (48% of in-school youth compared to 41% of 17 year old dropouts) provides some support for encouraging limited work experience for high school students, especially since job knowledge as well as achievement scores dropped during the last decade.[13]

This study underscored the importance of the total school program to youth. At least some participation in co-curricular activities was reported by 70% of the sample, and interference with activities was the most important reason for giving up a job. Also, interference with school was the most important reason for not seeking a job. The "extra curricular" program clearly is a powerful attraction for students. Many teachers regard activities, especially athletics, as an undue infringement on academics. Under financial stress, some schools have cut back or eliminated activities. Such cutbacks may in fact be costly if they damage holding power of the schools.

Furthermore, the dropouts may increase precisely among those groups for whom schools are the major hope for upward social and economic mobility. As cases in point, two-thirds of the black males in this study participated in athletics and nearly half of the females, black and white, participated in clubs. Overall, these activities are an important part of school life. Their cutbacks or discontinuance could have far-reaching ramifications.

One final point. Although our study did not seek to establish the relationship of certain deleterious effects of work on the personal lives of students, other studies have suggested that cynicism about the work ethic, increased alcohol, drug and tobacco use and delinquency result from increases in-school youth employment.[14] Substituting work on part-time jobs for participation in school related activities may therefore have hidden social costs that education, parents and taxpayers should consider carefully in cuts and shifts in school academic and extra-curricular programs.

Notes

[1]Russ DeVault, "Making Allowances," Atlanta Journal, August 3, 1982, p. B1-2.

[2]Edith Brill Roth, "The Working Teenager," American Education, 17 (October, 1981), 46-7.

[3]Christopher Johnson, "Schools and Work: Do They Ever Mix?" Today's Education, 69, (February-March, 1980) 50-52; Noak Lewin-Epstein, Youth Employment During High School, Washington: National Center for Educational Statistics, 1981.

[4]Johnson, "Schools and Work;" Ellen Greenberger and Lawrence O. Steinberg, Part-Time Employment of In-School Youth: An Assessment of Costs and Benefits, Irvine, California: Programs for Social Ecology, University of California [92717]; Education USA, December 7, 1981, pp. 114-115; Tom Mirga, "Jobs and Cars Linked to Delinquency...." Education Week II (September 8, 1982), p. 9.

[5]DeVault, "Making Allowances;" National Assessment of Educational Progress Newsletter, XIV (Fall, 1981), pp. 3, 6; Johnson, "Schools and Work."

[6]James J. Kilpatrick, "The Teen-Age Unemployed," The Atlanta Constitution, December 3, 1981, p. D3.

[7]See for example, Lewis-Epstein, "Youth Employment;" Greenberger and Steinberg, "Part-Time Employment."

[8]Lewin-Epstein, "Youth Employment."

[9]Ibid., Johnson, "School and Work;" Greenberger and Steinberg,"Part-Time Employment."

[10]Lewin-Epstein, "Youth Employment;" Greenberger and Steinberg, "Part-Time Employment." Eldon Gade and Lois Peterson, "A Comparison of Working and Nonworking High School Students on School Performance, Socioeconomic Status, and Self-Esteem," The Vocational Guidance Quarterly, 29 (September, 1980), 65-69 provide findings closer to ours.

[11]Lewin-Epstein, "Youth Employment."

[12]Ibid.

[13]NAEP, Newsletter.

[14]Greenberger and Steinberg, "Part-Time Employment;" U.S. Department of Justice study, Assessing the Relationship of Adult Council Careers to Juvenile Careers, as reported by Migra in Education Week.